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26 NOV 1965

**The Honorable John T. Connor  
Secretary of Commerce  
Department of Commerce  
Washington, D. C. 20230**

**Dear Mr. Connor:**

**This letter concerns the proposed American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII).**

**CIA agrees with the recommendation that Federal agencies adopt a standard code for communications and ADP. The basic idea is a good one and should lead to real gains in information exchange.**

**Although our future plans call for acquisition of ADP equipment compatible with ASCII standards, we recognize that it will be some time before a complete changeover can occur. Therefore, during the transition equipment manufacturers should be permitted to produce hardware for processing data in existing codes. Specialized equipment may be needed later on to assist in the conversion from non-standard codes to standard. CIA expects to be in a position to undertake ADP conversion to ASCII sometime in FY-67.**

**Insofar as our message communications system is concerned, we will have to continue for quite a few years utilizing the five-level Baudot code as our standard for exchanging teletype message traffic. The cost of large-scale conversion would be too great to accomplish until such time as our existing teletype and associated cryptographic equipment is normally replaced. This same problem, of course, exists with other government agencies with**

The Honorable John T. Connor  
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which we communicate and with which our communications system is inter-connected. We suggest that the timing of the message communications system conversion from the present five-level code to the ACSII eight-level code be established by the National Communications System structure.

The CIA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the American Standard Code for Information Interchange and wishes to be kept advised of your final recommendation to the Bureau of the Budget. If further information is needed, inquiries may be directed to Mr. Joseph Becker, Director of Computer Services, telephone government code

STATINTL


STATINTL

Sincerely,

(signed) W. F. Raborn

W. F. Raborn  
Director

CONCUR:

 Signed: John F. Blake

Deputy Director for Science and Technology

18 NOV 1965

Date

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**SECRET**

10 November 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Secretary of Commerce

SUBJECT : Comments on Federal Acceptance of ASCII

1. The Central Intelligence Agency applauds the attempt to accept ASCII as a standard code for communications and ADP. *within the government* *Its adoption among* ~~compatibility~~ should materially assist information exchange ~~between all~~ Federal Agencies.

2. *Our already the responsibility of* ~~The~~ Agency plans include new generation ADP equipment ~~which is~~ compatible with ASCII. This will allow the Agency to process the standard data in the FY67 time period. However, world wide information exchange equipment cannot be changed to the new standards overnight. Consequently, provision for "old" code interface will also be a requirement on new equipment for some time to come.

3. As you are aware, most ADP equipment currently in the ~~the~~ Agency is not compatible with the proposed standard. The Agency must continue to use much of this equipment beyond the proposed July 1966 implementation date. Thus, equipment manufacturers must, of course, be allowed to make and sell equipment not meeting the new ASCII Federal Standards ~~but~~ *when* required for interface and use with ~~these~~ these older types of ADP equipment. Specialized ~~services and/or~~ interface equipment to convert from/to ASCII code for input/output operations may be required on all older equipment. *at some future date.* No ~~agency~~ cost estimates *of* ~~of~~ *equipment* or computer time *necessary* for such conversion can be made at this time.

**SECRET**

GROUP 1  
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downgrading and  
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4. Insofar as our message communications system is concerned we of necessity will have to continue for quite a few years utilizing the five-level Baudot code as our standard for exchanging teletype message traffic. The cost of large scale conversion would be too great to accomplish until such time as our existing teletype and associated cryptographic equipment is normally replaced for other reasons. This same problem, of course, exists with other government agencies with which we communicate and with which our communications system is inter-connected. We suggest that the timing of the message communications system conversion from the present five-level code to the ACSII eight-level code be established by the National Communications System structure.

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3 November 1965

STATINTL MEMORANDUM FOR:

John:

Colonel White's office informed me that OCS definitely  
has the action on this one. Please discuss it with   
and give me your recommendation as to how we should proceed.

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JOSEPH BECKER  
Director  
Office of Computer Services

Attachment

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